

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 00578 281355Z

46

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0578

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, SP

SUBJ: PORTUGUESE UNITARY LABOR LAW AND SPANISH LABOR

BEGIN SUMMARY: SOURCES FROM ALL SPANISH CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS, INCLUDING COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS, FAVOR, OR AT LEAST ACCEPT, PLURALISTIC TRADE UNION SITUATION FOR POST-FRANCO SPAIN, AND REJECT ATTEMPTS DRAW PARALLEL WITH PORTUGUESE LABOR SITUATION. ONLY ORGANIZATION FAVORING MAINTENANCE IMPOSED UNITARY LABOR ORGANIZATION IS GOVT-CONTROLLED SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION (SSO), BUT EVEN SOME IS SSO PRIVATELY ADMIT TO FAVORING PLURALISTIC TRADE UNIONISM. REPORTED COMMUNIST ACCEPTANCE TRADE UNION PLURALISM, DESPITE THEIR EVENTUAL GOAL OF LABOR UNITY, REFLECTS ACCEPTANCE OF CURRENT REALITY IN CLANDESTINE LABOR SPHERE AND ACCORDS SPANISH COMMUNIST POLITICAL LINE SEEKING TO PROMOTE IMAGE AS A MODERATE AND RESPONSIBLE PARTY FAVORING A MULTI-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY FOR SPAIN. PORTUGUESE EVENTS HAVE ALSO STRENGTHENED
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PAGE 02 MADRID 00578 281355Z

RESOLVE NON-COMMUNIST CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS, SUCH AS UGT

AND USO, TO PROMOTE LABOR PLURALISM AND IS HAVING EFFECT STRENGTHENING THEIR TIES WITH INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION BODIES. END SUMMARY

1. EVENTS SURROUNDING IMPOSITION OF UNITARY LABOR ORGANIZATION LAW IN PORTUGAL HAVE AROUSED SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST AND RECEIVED WIDESPREAD PRESS COVERAGE IN SPAIN.

2. GENERAL CONSENSUS, HOWEVER, IS THAT ANY EFFORT TO TRY TO PROJECT PARALLEL OF PORTUGUESE LABOR SCENE TO LIKELY LABOR SITUATION IN POST-FRANCO SPAIN, WITH COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS POSSIBLY PLAYING ROLE IN SPAIN COMPARABLE TO PORTUGUESE INTERSINDICAL AND WITH SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCE) PROMOTING IMPOSITION UNITARY LABOR ORGANIZATION, IS ERRONEOUS ASSUMPTION.

3. LABATT HAS RECENTLY TALKED TO LEADERS AND/OR MEMBERS OF DIFFERENT CLANDESTINE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING WORKERS COMMISSIONS, AS WELL AS OF GOVT-CONTROLLED SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION (SSO), RE THEIR VIEWS THIS SUBJECT. WITH EXCEPTION OF SSO, ALL OTHER LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND MOST OUTSIDE OBSERVERS FORESEE PLURALISTIC TRADE UNION SITUATION IN POST-FRANCO ERA, ASSUMING CURRENT AUTHORITARIAN REGIME EVOLVES INTO OR IS REPLACED BY SOMETHING MORE DEMOCRATIC.

4. MOST SURPRISING ORGANIZATION WHICH REPORTEDLY ACCEPTS PLURALISTIC TRADE UNION SITUATION ARE PCE-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS, THE STRONGEST CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUP. WORKERS COMMISSIONS SOURCES CLAIM THAT, ALTHOUGH WORKERS COMMISSIONS FAVOR EVENTUAL LABOR UNITY FOR SPAIN, THEY RECOGNIZE, ACCEPT, AND ADMIT TO SEPARATE EXISTENCE AND IDENTITY OF OTHER TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, BOTH NOW AND IN POST-FRANCO ERA. WORKERS COMMISSIONS, HOWEVER, WILL CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR UNITY-OF-ACTION COOPERATION BETWEEN SUCH SEPARATE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.

5. SOCIALIST UGT AND CATHOLIC-ORIENTED USO, NEXT MOST IMPORTANT CLANDESTINE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, ALSO FAVOR TRADE UNION PLURALISM FOR POST-FRANCO ERA, WITH ONLY SOME VAGUE LIP SERVICE TO POSSIBLE EVENTUAL LABOR "UNITY", WHICH THEY INSIST, HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE TO BE FREELY ARRIVED AT AND COULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED AFTER CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 00578 281355Z

DEMOCRACY WERE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN SPAIN. OTHER LESS IMPORTANT CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS, SUCH AS BASQUE STV OR EXTREMIST CATHOLIC ORT (LATTER GROUP ALSO PARTICIPATES IN WORKERS COMMISSIONS) ALSO SHARE VIEW THAT PLURALISTIC TRADE UNION SITUATION WILL EMERGE.

6. ONLY ORGANIZATION CURRENTLY ADVOCATING UNITY TO EXCLUSION ANY OUTSIDE LABOR UNIONS IS GOVT-CONTROLLED SSO.

HISTORICALLY SSO HAS ALWAYS ADVOCATED UNITY, ALTHOUGH ON THEIR OWN FALANGIST-STYLE TERMS IN A GOVT-CONTROLLED LABOR ORGANIZATION, AS BEING JUSTIFIED IN SPECIAL SPANISH CONTEXT IN VIEW OF HISTORY OF EXCESSES WHICH RIVAL AND POLITICIZED TRADE UNIONS (E.G., UGT AND OLD ANARCHIST CNT) CARRIED OUT DURING SECOND SPANISH REPUBLIC AND IN SPANISH CIVIL WAR. EVEN WITH SSO, HOWEVER, THERE ARE VARIOUS INDIVIDUALS AND ELEMENTS WHO PRIVATELY ACKNOWLEDGE SSO IS UNLIKELY TO LAST INTO POST-FRANCO ERA AND IS MOST LIKELY BE REPLACED SOONER OR LATER BY PLURALISTIC TRADE UNION SYSTEM.

7. PROJECTIONS BY SOURCES QUERIED AS TO TYPE OF CONFIGURATION PLURALISTIC TRADE UNIONS WOULD TAKE IN A POSSIBLE LIBERALIZED POST-FRANCO SPAIN VARIED. THERE WAS NEAR-UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT, HOWEVER, LARGEST SINGLE FUTURE LABOR CENTER WOULD BE SUCCESSOR TO PRESENT WORKERS COMMISSIONS, WITH PCE AS STRONGEST ELEMENT AND WITH OTHER GROUPS, SUCH AS EXTREMIST CATHOLIC ORT, ALSO BELONGING TO SUCH TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION, AND THAT SECOND LARGEST LABOR CENTER WOULD BE A SOCIALIST TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION LED BY UGT AND STILL EMPLOYING ITS INITIALS WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE OTHER LIKEMINDED CURRENT GROUPS SUCH AS PORTION OF USO MEMBERSHIP. ASIDE FROM ONE PRINCIPALLY COMMUNIST AND ANOTHER PRINCIPALLY SOCIALIST TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION, ESTIMATES BARIED RE POSSIBLE FUTURE EXISTENCE OF OTHER SMALLER TRADE UNIONS WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE: (A) A SMALL CATHOLIC-ORIENTED LEFTIST UNION ALONG LINES OF FRENCH CFTD (POSSIBLY ENCOMPASSING SOME OF MORE LEFTIST USO MEMBERSHIP AND OTHERS); (B) A POSSIBLE RIGHTIST TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION MADE UP OF REMNANTS OF SSO IN COMBINATION WITH CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC WORKER ELEMENTS; (C) SMALL EXTREMIST LEFTIST UNIONS OF MAOIST, TROTSKYITE OR ANARCHIST PERSUASIONS, AND (D) SOME NON-POLITICAL AUTONOMOUS UNIONS, PARTICULARLY OF WHITE COLLAR WORKERS AND VOT EMPLOYEES.

8. COMMENT: CURRENT REPORTED ATTITUDE OF PCE AND WORKERS
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PAGE 04 MADRID 00578 281355Z

COMMISSIONS, WHO ADMIT TO LIKELIHOOD OF PLURALISTIC TRADE UNION SITUATION IN POST-FRANCO ERA AND ARE SUPPOSEDLY WILLING TO ACCEPT IT DESPITE THEIR PREFERENCE FOR A UNITARY SCHEME, IS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT. IN PART IT IS MERELY A RECOGNITION OF CURRENT REALITY IN VIEW OF SPANISH TRADE UNION TRADITION AND OF EXISTENCE VARIOUS STRONG CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS TODAY SOME OF WHICH HAVE STRONG INTERNATIONAL TIES. PCE ACCEPTANCE OF PLURALISTIC LABOR SCENE FOR POST-FRANCO ERA IS CLOSELY TIED TO PCE'S CURRENT POLITICAL STANCE IN SO-CALLED JUNTA DEMOCRATICA OPPOSITION COALITION WHICH PCE SECGEN SANTIAGO CARRILLO HAS FORMED WITH CERTAIN SPANISH BOURGEOIS ELEMENTS, AND TO CARRILLO'S EFFORTS TO PROJECT PCE IMAGE AS MODERATE, RESPONSIBLE, AND RESPECTABLE PARTY COMMITTED TO WESTERN EUROPEAN-STYLE MULTI-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY FOR SPAIN. CARRILLO AND PCE HAVE ALSO BEEN ANXIOUS TO DISASSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM ALVARO CUNHAL

AND PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY, WHOLM THEY SEEK TO REPRESENT
AS OLD LINE STALINISTS WITH NOTHING IN COMMON WITH PCE.

9. NOTWITHSTANDING PCE AND WORKERS COMMISSIONS ACCEPTANCE
LIKELY TRADE UNION PLURALISM IN POST-FRANCO ERA, HOWEVER, THIS
WILL NOT PREVENT PCE THROUGH WORKERS COMMISSIONS, FROM INTENSIFYING
ITS EFFORTS, PRINCIPALLY THROUGH FORTHCOMING SPRING SSO SHOP
STEWARD ELECTIONS, TO SEEK ELECTION OF ITS MILITANTS
TO AS MANY POSITIONS IN GOVT-CONTROLLED UNITARY SSO AS POSSIBLE
SO AS TO BE IN STRONGEST POSSIBLE POSITION OF ANY CLANDESTINE
LABOR GROUPS IN FUTURE, BOTH INSIDE SSO AND OUTSIDE OF IT.
(MOST OTHER CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS, HOWEVER, WITH POSSIBLE EX-
CEPTION UGT, ALSO PLAN TO CONTEST SSO SHOP STEWARD ELECTIONS IN
HOPES OF LIKEWISE SUBVERTING SSO FROM WITHIN.)

10. APRIL 25 PROTUGUESE COUP AND MANNER IN WHICH PCP
SUBSEQUENTLY TOOK OVER AND MANIPULATED INTERSINDICAL THERE,
HAVE NOT ONLY GREATLY STRENGTHENED RESOLVE DEMOCRATIC
CLANDESITNE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS TO PREVENT REPETITION OF PORTUGUESE
LABOR EVENTS IN SPAIN, BUT HAS ALSO HAD MARKED EFFECT ON ATTITUDE
INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION BODIES TOWARDS THEIR SPANISH FREE
TRADE UNION AFFILIATES WHO HAVE DURING PAST EIGHT
MONTHS BEEN RECEIVING INCREASED MORAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT FROM
THESE BODIES (E.G., UGT IS AFFILIATED TO ICFTU, ETUC, AND
VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS OR ITS'; USO, IS
AFFILIATED WITH ITS' SUCH AS IMF, ICF, AND IUF; AND STV, IS
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PAGE 05 MADRID 00578 281355Z

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